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FRESNO MAN SENTENCED TO 5 YEARS AND 10 MONTHS IN PRISON FOR CHILD PORNOGRAPHY POSSESSION

FRESNO, Calif.—Acting United States Attorney Lawrence G. Brown announced today that United States District Judge Lawrence J. O'Neill sentenced THOMAS BONES, 47, of Fresno, to five years and 10 months in prison for possession of child pornography. A 10-year term of supervised release will follow the prison sentence, during which his access to minors, computers, and the Internet will be restricted.

This case is the result of an investigation by the FBI Cyber Crimes Task Force, which consists of the FBI's Fresno office, Fresno Police Department, United States Secret Service, Fresno County Sheriff's Office, and California Department of Justice.

According to Assistant United States Attorney David Gappa, who prosecuted the case, BONES admitted that he possessed on a computer hard drive at least 300 images of child pornography. He also admitted that he used a computer and the Internet to obtain the images, that they were of prepubescent minors, and that several depicted violence or sadistic or masochistic conduct.

BONES was indicted on August 7, 2008, and he has been in federal custody since pleading guilty on February 20, 2009.

The prosecution was brought as part of Project Safe Childhood during Operation Valley Predator II, which took place from July 27, 2008, through August 22, 2008. Teams of law enforcement officers from more than 22 federal, state, and local agencies throughout the Central Valley made contact with 377 individuals, executed at least 19 state and federal search warrants, and arrested 61 persons on a variety of offenses ranging from child pornography crimes to failing to comply with state-mandated sex offender registration statutes. The operation resulted in approximately 17 new federal indictments with child sexual exploitation charges.

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